



# NEW YORK POST

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2008 / Partly sunny, 76-80 / Weather: Page 22

★★

SUNDAY

**Liz  
Smith**



... RAN into the delightful **Lee** and **Bob Woodruff** at a birthday party in Le Cirque's divine bar — called the Egi Room — and they're creating a gourmet, military-themed dinner at the NY Athletic Club for the Marine Corps Council, happening June 30. This helps US forces with Traumatic Brain Injury, such as Bob suffered while covering Iraq for ABC. Tickets are \$350 and may be obtained via [NYCMessNight@nycmcc.org](mailto:NYCMessNight@nycmcc.org). Bob and Lee are one of New York's most engaging couples and so dedicated to helping others.



[Bob Woodruff](#) wants you to drop and give him 20! Twenty dollars, that is. The ABC newsmen, who lost a piece of his skull in [Iraq](#), is teaming with the [NYC Marine Corps Council](#) to help soldiers with traumatic head injuries. They'll introduce black-tied swells to the leatherneck tradition of "Mess Night" at a June 30 dinner, where guests will be barred from cussing, chewing gum, clinking glasses for attention and talking about politics, religion or money. Rulebreakers will be fined \$5 to \$30. Among those expected are top cop [Ray Kelly](#), [Harvey Keitel](#) [Gary Sinise](#) and [Conan O'Brien](#).

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## THE NEW YORK OBSERVER

### Eight-Day Week

JUNE 25 - JULY 2

MONDAY 6/30

**MEN ... IN UNIFORMS!** If you're tired of the squishy, slippery, chatty (hell: *truly psycho?*) men you're meeting on [Match.com](#) and [J Date](#), the New York City Marine Corps is here to blow your bugle with an inaugural black-tie affair named "Mess Night"—after a marine feasting tradition dating from the 1500s, explained Lt. Col. Jeff Carusone—at the New York Athletic Club, to benefit the **Bob Woodruff Family Foundation**, a charity for wounded soldiers that Mr. Woodruff started after he was injured. Civilians are invited, even though non-Marines are not usually present at Mess Night:



"To tell you the truth, this is the first mess in mixed company, and it will be interesting to see how it pans out," said Mr. Carusone. (Oops, Lieutenant Colonel Carusone! *Sir!*) "Typically, not even spouses attend a mess night." He told us that weapons used in Iraq will be on display (This is getting hot.) Further, to assist with fund-raising, attendees will be "fined" for "Violations of the Mess Etiquette" including passing wine in the wrong direction (\$15), or discussing politics or religion (\$30). "Then there will be some playful protesting, which might make it go up to \$40 and maybe even \$50," said Mr. Carusone. "Someone might finally stand up and say, 'I'll put \$100 in the pot, and I'll really tell you how I feel!'" Let's hope the guns—but not the fellas—are loaded with blanks. *Sir!*

[New York City Mess Night, New York Athletic Club, 180 Central Park South, 6 p.m., 212-247-5100]



Left to right: NYC Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, ABC's Bob Woodruff, Tomoko Otusuj, Shannon Wikinson, Renee Burdof (Woodruff Foundation), Lt. Gen. Ronald S. Coleman, USMC S. Coleman.

**GOTHAM GOSSIP**

"Those who came back, whether you're for or against the war in Iraq, need to be treated with dignity," **Bob Woodruff** summed up the evening's theme. Still, the mood at the first Gourmet Dinner to Celebrate NYC Marines Mess Night at the NYC Athletic Club was pure exuberance. Former and current Marines, policemen, 9/11 heroes and civilians enjoyed traditional military dishes and bonhomie.

One show stopper: the Marine Corps Guard and NYPD Emerald Society Pipe & Drum Band led a symbolic "presentation of the beef." It was fitting for a room filled with testosterone.

Woodruff, the former ABC News anchor — now correspondent — who suffered a traumatic brain injury while reporting from Iraq, **Lt. General Ronald S. Coleman**, the third highest ranking officer in the Marines Corps and **Joe Lisi**, an actor on *Law and Order* and *Third Watch* and former Marine and retired NYPD precinct captain, presided over the meal. Food Network *Iron Chef* **John Besh** and military food expert **Agostino von Hassell** planned the historically accurate menu. Proceeds benefited the Bob Woodruff Family Foundation which assists injured service members.

Woodruff told the group, "I do feel guilty to this day that my wife Lee will not permit me to go back." He said he was saved by army pilots that were radioed not to go down, because it was too dangerous. "But they came anyways," he said. "They turned off the radio. They had no idea who they were saving."

"This is a great evening to honor Marines," the highly decorated Lt. General Coleman told the *Resident*. "What we're saying is, thank you to all Marines past, present and future, whether you were wounded in this war or wars hundreds of years ago."

Wait, I had a really important question: Does he watch TV's *Amy Winehouse*? "I don't, but my wife does. She loves it so much she tapes it." Does she feel it's an accurate depiction? "We don't talk about it. Now if you were talking about Marine wives that'd be a different story. It's Navy all the way. There will always be a competition and Navy will always win."

—Lee Fryd

**THE NEW YORK OBSERVER**  
 NEW YORK'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER  
 JULY 7-14, 2008 VOL. 22 NUMBER

**He Could Stand the Heat, Now He's in the Kitchen**

He did two tours of duty in Iraq before dodging European models in Soho on his way to cooking school

**C**aptain Stefan Bari said the magazine at the Gianery Tavern could wear a little more salt. Bari's been back only a few months from his second tour in Iraq. For 10 years, he was one of the few, the proud, or, as he puts it, "the last"—a Marine. Now he lives in Soho.

Yes, there are soldiers walking around in flimsy tight jeans, looking like those cancer 5'10" tall guys. Some of them probably look just like you or me. Mr. Bari doesn't. He is 6-foot-1, the hair short like a well-tailored pterodactyl, with long, slender arms and great hands that could easily crush across the table and pop your head off the cork.

His biceps, all about 10 inches, look like they're not even a man when he was on the team. "Some guys who come back here if they're fit," he said.

"I like a little more salt," said Mr. Bari. There are other reasons. Bari's trained in his kitchen for a while off his coat and some checkered pants. He's attending classes at the French Culinary Institute and attending at Club. While in Iraq, Mr. Bari did his best to avoid the Marine mess hall. He subsisted on the protein shakes and oatmeal packets his mess would send him, and dinner at the houses of the friends he made in Iraq.

His buddies down at Four Six, aren't pan-seared anymore. That had been served on a bed of red beans. He ate them and said he had sleep but not sense. "I remember those soybeans and beefs before, but I thought it was good. A little bit of soybeans in there. The beans weren't overpowering it

going to be working in a restaurant. You don't start out at top-of-the salary."

He says he's fallen in love with New York. "It's amazing, when you're walking through the streets of the city," said Mr. Bari. "You see the huge buildings, and everything is so big and tall, and there's so many people. It's great, though. You can't know if you're outdoors or you can walk into a place and have a beautiful view."

Bari's made a lot of friends, later that night, while showing good. Mr. Bari had trouble focusing on the game on account of all the beautiful women he was getting. He didn't like it when he heard Bari or he'd be. "I'm a Marine," he said, shaking his head. "I don't like to lie."

12th after Bari has taken getting used to. One dinner he described life in the time, he was stationed in, outside of Berlin. "When you work around, you know your self, your equipment, you spend out, you don't all bunch together, just sort of stand different areas out. If you see something suspicious on the road, you stop—it could be a bomb. You're extremely aware of your surroundings," he said.

Now that he's back, "It's just kind of like, OK, I don't need to look at every window when I'm walking down the street. But every place at least is in a potential bomb." The idea is to live right. It's a new morning he wants to make his bed.



Captain Stefan Bari in Iraq

It includes—a diet would ring out, a readable book.

By that time, most people were "kind of people dying, things blowing up, so they started making more of an effort," he said. "These guys who were like, 'I don't know what the terrorists do, I'm going to work with the Americans to get this place running.'"

Mr. Bari said that when he wants people socially or at the cooking school, conversation progresses and he says what he's been up to for the past decade, the "good response is, 'Wow, that's awesome,'" said Mr. Bari. "Usually people thank you, who is thanking for a little awkward. I don't need to be thanked."

He said the questions usually stop there. As he sat past that night, I asked him his opinion of the war later, he told me I was the best person to ask him that question they had returned. "I guess that is a bit odd," said Mr. Bari. He said he believes it was the right thing to do, that it was presented to the world in a very unfortunate way, but that people will be thanking the Marines in 50 years.

This comment Mr. Bari is hoping to make his stop through his monthly list of great restaurants in the city. He told me that when he had had this unusual conversation with a girl at military school.

"I was saying it was sort of funny that here I'm having short ribs, which is really great and I was considering an assault involving it like a pattern of tanks." This was at Twentynine Palms, the world's largest Marine base, in Southern California; they used live ammo. "It's called a range and you can see, where you basically learn how to take an enemy objective, a hard-to-reach position. They've been there in the dirt, dug in. You give the target with armor, you send in the tanks, the Cobra attack helicopters. The jets drop 1,000-pound bombs, they're technically called M83 bombs, the Cobra shoot with guns and missiles. Then just as the planes leave, the artillery picks up and this whole time you're moving, you're in your mechanized troop carrier vehicle—you're closing with the objective. You start his, dropping big bombs, and then you go to artillery, which are a little similar to you can get a little closer. You've got a job of tanks, then the mechanized troop transport—it's my whole company. So you get closer and closer as you get to those smaller type of weapons, and by the end, you start heading forward, and you get to a point where your gun are on the objective in the trench and there are paper targets and things like that. It's pretty intense."

—www.gothamobserver.com



SPENCER MORGAN



Monday June 30, 2008, 6:00 pm until 11:00 p.m., Venue: The [New York Athletic Club \(9th Floor\)](#), 180 Central Park South, New York, NY 10019. [The New York City Marine Corps Council's](#) New York City Mess Night honored [America's wounded warriors](#). All benefit proceeds will be given to the [Bob Woodruff Family Fund](#), which works to help our U.S. forces affected by Traumatic Brain Injury, a significant casualty issue on the Iraqi battlefield today. About "[Mess Night](#)" - "Mess Night" is a venerable [Marine Corps](#) tradition dating from the 1500's that few civilians experience. The event encompasses a cocktail hour, an opulent feast, good cheer and a range of fines for violating guidelines of the mess, which all guests are informed of at the onset. (Violations include foul language, chewing gum, rapping glassware for attention, rearranging table settings and discussing politics, shop, money or religion. Fines begin at \$1 and escalate to \$30 for NYC elite and civilians. All penalties will be donated to [The Bob Woodruff Family Fund](#).) Menu plan based on a gourmet dinner, incorporating historically accurate military meal items, prepared by [Chef John Besh](#) (of Food Network Iron Chef renown), along with author, Historian and military food expert [Agostino von Hassell](#) | Dinner prepared by Hassell and [Chef Mike DeFonzo](#) from Manhattan's famous PJ Clarke's restaurant. | Steak donated by [Strassburger Meats](#), a supplier of Smith & Wollensky steak house. [Murray's Cheese](#) contributed a range of cheeses. All guests received a copy of "New York City Mess Night: An Introduction and Essential Companion for Pleasantly Surviving a [Marine Corps Mess Night](#)." [About The NYC Marines](#) - New York City boasts one of the nation's largest populations of active-duty, former and friends of the [Marines](#). The [NYC Marine Corps Council](#), a 501c civilian-directed organization, is the first organization of its kind dedicated to synergizing and coordinating the numerous Marine Corps interests in the New York City area. A special emphasis of the organization is outreaching to wounded Marines and members of all Armed Services returning from tours of duty, supporting camaraderie, quality of life and career transition activities. From the highest echelons of Wall Street, to the entertainment industries to the NYPD, former Marines go on to serve in many important civilian capacities. The NYC MARINES cultivate and support this diverse and committed community. **Guests of Honor:** **\*\*Bob Woodruff** was Civilian Guest of Honor\*\*\* Bob is the Author of the best-seller [In An Instant](#), Founder of [The Bob Woodruff Family Foundation](#) and Career National Television News Anchor and Correspondent. [JOE LISI](#) is President of the Mess Marine, Actor and NYC Native Retired NYPD Precinct Captain. [Lieutenant General Ronald S. Coleman](#), USMC, Senior Military Guest of Honor, Deputy Commandant for [Manpower and Reserve Affairs](#).



## 2008 New York City Mess Night and Wounded Warrior Tribute

Jun 30, 2008 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
(Monday)

[The New York Athletic Club](#)

## Huliq News

2008 New York City Mess Night and Wounded Warrior Tribute NYC MARINE CORPS COUNCIL

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**NYC MARINE CORPS COUNCIL**  
**2008 New York City Mess Night and Wounded Warrior Tribute**



## NEW · YORK · SOCIAL · DIARY

Monday, June 30 2008

**Event Title:**

NYC MARINE CORPS COUNCIL 2008 New York City Mess Night and Wounded Warrior Tribute.

**Event Description:**

The New York City Marine Corps Council's New York City Mess Night will honor America's wounded warriors. All benefit proceeds will be given to the Bob Woodruff Family Fund ([www.bobwoodrufffamilyfund.org](http://www.bobwoodrufffamilyfund.org)), which works to help our U.S. forces affected by Traumatic Brain Injury, a significant casualty issue on the Iraqi battlefield today.

About "Mess Night" - "Mess Night" is a venerable Marine Corps tradition dating from the 1500's that few civilians experience. The event encompasses a cocktail hour, an opulent feast, good cheer and a range of fines for violating guidelines of the mess, which all guests are informed of at the onset. (Violations include foul language, chewing gum, rapping glassware for attention, rearranging table settings and discussing politics, shop, money or religion. Fines begin at \$1 and escalate to \$30 for "NYC elite" and civilians. All penalties will be donated to The Bob Woodruff Family Fund.)

All guests will receive a copy of "New York City Mess Night: An Introduction and Essential Companion for Pleasantly Surviving a Marine Corps Mess Night. Copies available on request.

About The NYC Marines - New York City boasts one of the nation's largest populations of active-duty, former and friends of the Marines. The NYC MARINES, a 501c civilian-directed organization (filed), is the first organization of its kind dedicated to synergizing and coordinating the numerous Marine Corps interests in the New York City area. In support of today's Marine Corps priorities, the organization currently emphasizes outreach to wounded Marines and others returning from tours of duty, supporting camaraderie, quality of life and career transition activities. From the highest echelons of Wall Street, to the entertainment industries to the NYPD, former Marines go on to serve in many important civilian capacities. The NYC MARINES cultivate and support this diverse and committed community.

**Time:**

Starts 6:00 pm until 11:00 pm.

**Co-Chairs and Honorees (when applicable):**

BOB WOODRUFF; JOE LISI ; LIEUTENANT GENERAL RONALD S. COLEMAN, USMC.

**Location:**

The New York Athletic Club (9th Floor), 180 Central Park South, New York, NY 10019.

**Ticket Price:**

\$350 per person (Active duty military sponsorships also accepted).